



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

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SEIU District 1199 New England  
Before the Public Health Committee

*In Support of Proposed Senate Bill 375 - AN ACT CONCERNING NURSING HOME STAFFING LEVELS*

Good Afternoon Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Nedra Williams and I work as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at Parkville Nursing Home here in Hartford. **I am here today to urge you to pass Senate Bill 375.**

I work on the Alzheimer's unit. They're our special needs residents. I say that because some of them don't know the day, the time, the year. It's just a part of the having Alzheimer's. There are so many things we have to pay attention to. It's not just keeping them clean and safe, we have to pay attention to their skin condition, their mobility, their food intake.

One particular resident we would feed pureed food and thin liquids. I noticed she had been coughing and I brought it to the dietician and told her that she had to be re-evaluated. She got re-evaluated and we found out that she needed to be on thick liquids instead of thin. The speech therapist told me if I hadn't noticed that it could have been a problem and she could have aspirated. As aides we're on the forefront. When we don't have enough staff we can miss things here or there because we're rushing to take care of everyone's basic needs. Some of our residents are bed ridden and can't do anything for themselves. When we rush a resident who is stiff and contracted we could hurt them or hurt ourselves. In order to give proper care we need enough staff and we need time.

Every resident has their own specific needs. One may be able to do more, while others require a lot of time to care for them. They might not just want their hair to be washed, they might want it styled too. They might want to go to the bank and get their money. Sometimes they want to reflect on their life with someone and if they get upset and cry they just want you to be there for them. They have emotions and they have feelings. Think about what your life would be like if you were upset and no one was there to comfort you.

I have a particular resident who has nobody. No family. No kids. She was a clinical social worker when she was younger. She'll see other people getting visitors and cry. She'll say "I don't have anybody". My coworkers and I are the only family she has. She has a conservator who comes once in a blue moon. She's told that conservator that she doesn't want them to represent her anymore, that she wants Nedra – me – to represent her. She has no family to come and advocate for her. It's upsetting for her and for us as workers. We feel their pain and we're there with them.

This same resident is particular about her food and she doesn't always want to eat what we're serving in the nursing home. She loves wonton soup. Sometimes on my day off I will stop and buy her clothes, shoes, or I'll buy her some wonton soup and bring it in. I use my own money for that. I just can't see her there and let that go. She's my resident. I have another resident who loves Dove soap and baby shampoo. So I go buy it and bring it in the next day. We all do it. We have residents who have absolutely nothing. We want to see our residents looking nice and clean and we like to see them happy.

Care matters. Residents deserve dignity and humanity. Care isn't just about bathing and showering. It's not just about keeping residents safe. It is about paying attention to the whole person, physically and emotionally. I urge you to pass this staffing bill and to help be a positive force for change in our resident lives. Thank you for your time.